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RECLAIMING TRANS HISTORY

Storyteller Bear Bergman centers 18th-century trans pioneer

EMBRACE PRAGMATIC JOY

How to channel your Midwestern resilience into action

PRIDE MEANS EVERYONE

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By Chris Azzopardi

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4 5 Queer Things You Can Do Right Now-ish

6 Uniting with Trans People: Why the Community Must Rally Together in the Face of Trump's Anti-Trans Agenda

7 Pragmatic Joy: How You Can Help Michigan's LGBTQ+ Community Thrive Despite Political Headwinds

8 Reveling in Resilient Joy: MiGen's Annual Fashion Show Starring LGBTQ+ Elders

9 Recovering Forgotten Trans History: Storyteller S. Bear Bergman Brings 'The First Jew in Canada' to Ann Arbor Church

10 The Sound of Defiance: A New Deep Dive into Music's Role in LGBTQ+ Progress

12 Creep of the Week: Instead of Yelling at Clouds, an Old Man in Wisconsin Voices Support for Rainbows

13 The Scroll: Jason Morgan Leads Effort to Strike Down Marriage Ban in Michigan

14 Margaret Cho, in Beast Mode: The Trailblazing Comedian and Musician Has a Lot to Say About These Uncertain Times

15 What Is It Really Like to Be a Queer Musician in Michigan?

16 An Ode to Kim Petras: Why America Needs More Trans Pop Stars

20 When Arabic Lyrics Become American Refuge

Page 14

MICHIGAN'S LGBTQ+ NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993
Between the Lines
RECLAIMING TRANS HISTORY
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5 Queer Things You Can Do Right Now-ish

BY KELLI DUNHAM

If you're weary of March's "lion" energy (and we're not talking about the weather so much) — and you're feeling like the ideal hangout involves you, your cats and the covers — you're not alone, friend. But if you can venture out, there's so much to do! You can meet Michigan Sen. Mallory McMorrow as she launches her new book, cheer on the Pistons at their Pride Night and watch dapper contestants vie for the title of "Hot Daddy" in Ferndale. If that's not enough, there's a rooftop lesbian social and a deep dive into polyamory as a survival strategy.

"The book we need now: both inspiration and a road map for doing the next right thing." —Heather Cox Richardson
HATE WON'T WIN
MALLORY McMORROW

1

Meet Michigan Senator and Ally Mallory McMorrow

State Sen. Mallory McMorrow's viral speech against hate is unfortunately more relevant now than when she gave it three years ago. If you've been listening on repeat to her saying "I am straight, white and Christian" while simultaneously being very nearly spitting mad on our behalf (oh, just me?) this event is a chance to hear more.

Sidetrack Bookshop will host a launch for McMorrow's book "Hate Won't Win: Find Your Power and Leave This World Better Than You Found It" on March 23, and Sidetrack co-founder Jennifer Carney could not be more excited. "We are thrilled to host this event because Senator McMorrow is the leader our world needs now," she told BTL. "She stood by our side in March 2023 when online protestors threatened Sidetrack Bookshop's Drag Story Hour. Despite the hateful rhetoric, Senator McMorrow showed up, in person."

Writer Nicole Tersigni (of "Men to Avoid in Art and Life" fame) will lead the conversation, so expect both wisdom and wit. Plus this is all going down at Royal Oak High School, so if you never got a chance to be out as a teenager, you can sashay down those halls and redo a little of your own queer history.

March 23, 6-9 p.m., Royal Oak High School (1500 Lexington Blvd., Royal Oak). Reserve tickets at bit.ly/hatewontwin.

2

Cheer on the Pistons at Pride Night

The Detroit Pistons are rolling out the rainbow carpet for their annual Pride Night, and it's your chance to catch the action at Little Caesars Arena.

"It is so important, now more than ever, to come together to represent and celebrate who we are as a community, showing that we have always existed and will always exist," Nikki Wald, Pistons group sales executive, told BTL.

Snag the Pistons Pride package for a game ticket, a food and beverage credit, an adorable Pistons Pride jersey, a special Pride themed half-time show and an opportunity to go on the court after the game to shoot a free throw!

March 28, 7 p.m., Little Caesars Arena (2645 Woodward Ave., Detroit). Tickets at pistons.com/pride.

3

Join a Lesbian Social Event

Picture this: A rooftop lounge. A sea of queer women. Cocktails and conversation flowing under the Detroit skyline. We're not describing a scene from a potential Hollywood sapphic rom-com (which we all know would be cast with straight women) — it's the monthly Lesbian Social gathering.

This real-deal event is held every second Sunday at the Rooftop Lounge in Godfrey Hotel, hosted by Lesbian Social Detroit. Whether you're new in town, looking for community or just want an excuse to wear formal flannel you look incredible in (what? Just me again?), this is the spot.

Every second Sunday of the month, The Godfrey Hotel (1401 Michigan Ave., Detroit). Learn more at bit.ly/lesbiansocialdetroit.

4

Watch Hot Daddies Compete for the Crown

We all know the Father's Day greeting cards that say "It takes someone special to be a daddy" aren't really meant for us, but that doesn't stop us from occasionally sending one to the queer daddy in our lives, right?

If you'd like to celebrate that amazing daddy energy and raise money for Ferndale Pride, the Hot Daddies Contest is where you need to be! To compete, fill out the application online. The only requirements are that you need to be 35 and over and want the title. The contestant who raises the most money (beforehand and at the event) wins. Julia Music, Ferndale Pride event director, explains, "Technically, daddies can sign up until the day of the event; however, it's an advantage to start early."

If Daddy-dom isn't your thing, you can support by showing up at 215 West and throwing dollars at the daddies! Music said, "DJs Brando and Darryl are spinning until midnight, so come out and party with us."

March 21, 9-11:30 p.m., 215 West (215 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale). Learn more and sign up to compete at bit.ly/hotdaddies25.

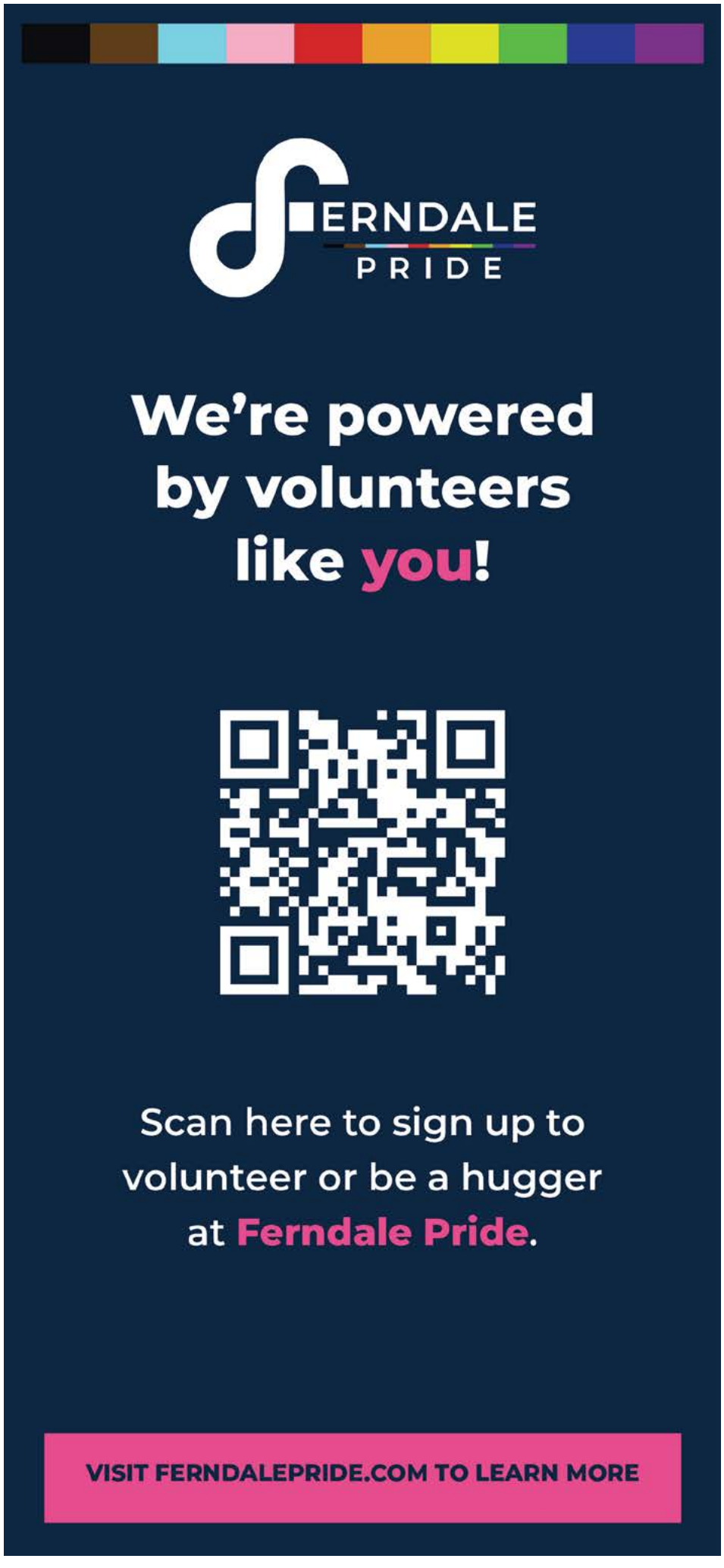
5

Celebrate Queer Mutual Aid

What if polyamory isn't just a relationship style, but a radical blueprint for collective care? If this question catches your attention (or your heart) join Jaime Grant ("Polyamory for Dummies"), JD Davids ("The Cranky Queer Guide to Chronic Illness") and Kelli Dunham (comedian, ex-nun and, yes, full disclosure, writer of this column) for a discussion about love, survival and finding the right group chat app for your polycule.

Livestreamed from NYC's Bureau of General Services - Queer Division, this convo is perfect for polyamory veterans, exhausted activists, poly-curious and anyone who wants to understand and expand the way queers care for one another.

March 27, 7 p.m., BGSQD (virtual) Learn more at bit.ly/polyamoryandmutualaid.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Uniting with Trans People

Why the community must rally together in the face of Trump's anti-trans agenda

BY JAY KAPLAN

When straight people see the acronym LGBTQ+, they tend to think of the varied people falling under its broad umbrella as a monolith — a cohesive group of folks united by our queerness. But those of us who are part of the LGBTQ+ community know how wrong that perception can sometimes be.

In reality, there can be clear divisions and lack of support for each other. And that lack of unity, especially in times as perilous as these, can end up hurting all of us.

What has me thinking about this lately is President Donald Trump's recent flurry of executive orders specifically targeting trans people and the response — or more accurately, the lack of response — from some members of the gay and lesbian community.

This is a point that needs to be made absolutely clear: Anyone who thinks the issues affecting trans people aren't fundamentally connected with the broader LGBTQ+ community doesn't know or understand the history of our movement and how it began. The fact is, it wasn't white, cisgender gay men like me who launched the movement to obtain equal rights. Instead, it was trans women of color who played a leading role in the 1969 Stonewall Riots, which played a pivotal role in launching the LGBTQ+ civil rights movement.

Angelica Christina, board director of the Stonewall Inn Gives Back Initiative, was blunt in her assessment of the debt owed trans people:

"Pride would not exist without trans people, especially trans women of color like Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera and Miss Major Griffin Gracey, who were on the front lines and fought for queer and trans liberation and for the LGBTQIA+ movement."

Now there are attempts underway to erase that history. As NPR recently reported, "The National Park Service website exploring the history and significance of the Stonewall Uprising has been stripped of any mention of transgender people. The page was also updated to remove the 'T' from the previously used acronym 'LGBTQ+' — now, referring to the community as either 'LGB' or 'LGBQ.' References to the word 'queer' have also been removed."

Clear and present danger

Having already issued at least six executive orders intended to further marginalize trans people by attempting to deprive them of their rights, the president is hard at work pushing an agenda of bigotry against a group of people that make up fewer than 1% of the population.

We — and by that I mean the entire LGBTQ+ community and all of our allies — cannot let him succeed. Aside from the show of solidarity for our trans brothers and sisters, supporting them now is also an act of self-preservation.

Does anyone believe that Trump, and the politicians who follow his lead, will confine their bigotry and hate-mongering to just one segment of our community? I seriously doubt there are many among us who are that naïve or gullible.

In fact, the president has already shown his disdain for all LGBTQ+ people through actions taken on his first day in office. In rescinding executive orders issued by Joe Biden while in office, Trump, with the stroke of a pen, abolished an order calling for LGBTQ+ people's health equity, LGBTQ+ data collection and nondiscrimination protections, including in health care.

Also rescinded were orders that had called for nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ young people in school, which could contribute to stigma and worsened mental health.

The message is clear: No one who belongs to the LGBTQ+ community can feel safe these days.

What to do?

Given the sheer number of actions being taken, it is easy to understand how some folks might feel overwhelmed. But we cannot give in to despair. If we do, the people trying to deprive us of our rights automatically win.

Instead, we need to rally around each other, and unite in opposition to what is happening.

One thing each of us can do is use the various social media platforms available to us to start spreading messages of solidarity and mutual support. Fly a rainbow flag and or the transgender flag to signal support for the community. Also contact officeholders in both Washington, D.C. and Lansing to make sure they understand that assaults on the LGBTQ+ community in general, and the trans community specifically, will not be tolerated, ever.

Then ask our allies to join that effort. As the great, late Dr. Martin Luther King said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." We are all in this together.

There truly is strength in numbers. If enough of us show we are united in opposition to attacks on trans people, we can make a real difference.

The time to act is now.

Jay Kaplan is the Nancy Katz & Margo Dichtelmiller LGBTQ+ Rights Project staff attorney for the ACLU of Michigan.

Pragmatic Joy: How You Can Help Michigan's LGBTQ+ Community Thrive Despite Political Headwinds

Plus, lessons inspired by our elders on turning anxiety into action

BY SARAH BRICKER HUNT

I could go on at length (just ask my loved ones) about the palpable disappointment I've been feeling lately as "centrist Democrats" (we used to call them Reagan Republicans) fail to actually stand for anything and, frequently, align with the most anti-LGBTQ+ president of our lifetimes. Plenty of columnists and well-informed political analysts have done that job for me, so I won't. Suffice to say, I strongly feel we need more Jeremy Moss energy in D.C. More Jasmine Crockett, less middle of the road.

I could also spend some time lamenting about how frustrating it is as a journalist to have calls and requests for comment on issues of the utmost importance to thousands of Michigan LGBTQ+ community members go unanswered.

I could write about missed opportunities to bring more transparency to our community when leading candidates opted not to complete our candidate survey last fall and who refused to grant us interviews or write op-eds — candidates who never reached out from their campaigns in an effort to reach LGBTQ+ voters at an extremely vulnerable moment in time via the state's largest, longest-running LGBTQ+ publication.

I could ponder when it was that elected officials stopped performing what I consider a basic duty — offering continued reassurance to at-risk constituents when they are being targeted by people we should all be rallying against as a society. Think literal Nazis. And homophobes, transphobes and racists. It's shocking that it is apparently considered an act of political bravery to stand up and say it's not OK for hundreds of fully grown men to shout anti-LGBTQ+ epitaphs at a teenager at a protest in Dearborn, for example — an act of bravery we didn't see, by the way.

It shouldn't be politically dangerous to say the word "transgender" in a national speech at a time when anti-trans legislation and executive orders are key drivers of the current, increasingly cruel presidential agenda. When Republicans are still taking a victory lap and explicitly pointing to trans issues as winning them the election, it's not the time for Democrats, too, to turn away from the community like anything "trans" is a hot potato issue not worth the political risk. Civil rights are on the line, and we shouldn't have to beg elected officials to defend basic, human rights that shouldn't be up for debate in any court in this country.

Trust me when I say all of the above keeps me up at night.

I grieve for what we've lost — the abrupt pulling of the rug out from under what had been an ever-expanding LGBTQ+ umbrella — and I worry about what we've gained: a widening gap between identities within our own community. Much of what we must focus on as an LGBTQ+ publication these days involves a clear and growing rift within the LGBTQ+ community — or is it the LGB community? Sadly, it's exactly where they want us to focus.

The ongoing conversation is ugly, though from an editorial perspective, it hasn't been a difficult choice. **We're not leaving the trans community behind**, and our coverage will always reflect a broad, diverse coalition of LGBTQ+ folks. In the day to day, our staff is leaning on one another to process our individual responses to the onslaught of bad news and then, we're forging ahead. Happily, it's exactly what they don't want us to do.

OK yeah, things are not great... so what am I supposed to do?

I'm so glad you asked, because it turns out, we're not helpless. I am regularly in contact with LGBTQ+ pioneers who have, somehow, seen even worse days, including people who survived the living hell of an AIDS crisis that devastated the gay and trans communities.

These remarkable individuals managed to secure rights we take for granted today during extremely turbulent, anti-LGBTQ+ eras. I am driven every day by their examples, and often ask these LGBTQ+ elders how they did it. "How could you deal with what was happening all around you — as your loved ones literally died while the government refused to even say the word 'AIDS' — while also learning how to become an advocate and leader?"

Often, the answer is one I've come to expect: "Someone had to, and no one except us was going to do it for us." For us; by us. Elected officials are only willing (and to be fair, only able) to help our community to a point. We can put gas in their tanks, but the LGBTQ+ community should be running the GPS when it comes to coalescing around a message focused on what we need them to do for us.

Here are four things you can do right away to tune out the noise and focus in on actions that will help our community no matter who is in the White House:

1. Find the helpers — and listen to them.

Unlike our LGBTQ+ elders, we don't have to birth the entire LGBTQ+ advocacy movement. A robust, engaged community of advocates thrives in Michigan, and it exists especially for moments like this. These organizations lead the way on prioritizing the needs of the community with wisdom, knowledge and the strength of networks they've built for decades. This action item is a gimme: If you don't know where to start, start here.

Here are a few of the leading orgs, but there are many others, especially at the local level, throughout the state.

- **Equality Michigan:** LGBTQ+ education, victim services and outreach.
- **ACLU of Michigan LGBT Project:** legal help and advocacy.
- **Transgender Michigan:** Michigan's longest-running trans advocacy and outreach group.
- **Stand with Trans:** Youth and young adult focused trans advocacy, outreach, education and support.
- **MiGen:** Michigan's LGBTQ+ Elders Network.
- **Affirmations:** LGBTQ+ community center in Ferndale.
- **PFLAG Detroit:** support, education and advocacy.

2. Focus your political energy.

Beyond writing and calling your representatives (the 5Calls.org approach is worthwhile), there are many direct ways to get involved in the messy, but critical business of shaping the LGBTQ+ political agenda in Michigan and bringing that message to elected officials.

These organizations and coalitions make it a point to eliminate barriers of entry — they want people just like you to join the fight in real and tangible ways:

- **Unity Fund:** highlights and assists the candidacies of Michigan LGBTQ+ candidates.
- **LGBT and Allies Caucus of the Michigan Democratic Party**: works to impact legislative issues.
- **Equality Michigan Action Network:** non- partisan political advocacy (formerly the Triangle Foundation).
- **Transgender Unity Coalition**: community advocacy.

Send us a letter to the editor while you're at it. We want to hear from you! Write to editor@pridesource.com.

3. Stay informed — but don't get distracted.

These days, when I consume news, I keep an overarching question in mind: Is this news focused purely on speculation or is it factually informative? I can create my own

See **Pragmatic Joy**, page 22

Reveling in Resilient Joy

MiGen's annual fashion show starring LGBTQ+ elders

MiGen, Michigan's LGBTQ+ Elders Network, hosted its annual Rainbow Resilience fashion show on March 2, featuring local LGBTQ+ older adults who modeled fashion, resilient joy and unabashed visibility.

More than 200 attendees watched participants strut, twirl and embrace their identities in a room buzzing with positive energy, including local advocates Jay Kaplan (ACLU of Michigan), Emme Zanotti (Equality Michigan), Rev. Dr. Roland Stringfellow (MCC-Detroit) and Michelle Fox-Phillips (GNA Gender Identity Network Alliance). MiGen Executive Director Angela Gabridge led the event.

After the event, MiGen shared this statement:

"We are truly in awe of Sunday's Rainbow Resilience fashion show. With more than 200 people in attendance, the energy, love and joy in the room were beyond inspiring. Watching 11 LGBTQ+ older adults grace the runway with confidence, style and pride was a powerful reminder of the resilience and beauty within our community.

This show was more than just a runway — it was a statement of visibility, self-expression and joy. Every model brought their story to life, walking with courage and authenticity. From the carefully curated looks to the heartfelt collaborations between designers and models, each moment reinforced why this work matters.

To everyone who participated, attended and supported this event — thank you. Your presence, your stories and your unwavering commitment to uplifting LGBTQ+ older adults made this night unforgettable. Rainbow Resilience: An Ageless Fashion Affair is proof that our community's spirit shines at every age, and we can't wait to continue building this legacy together."

From the 2025 Rainbow Resilience: An Ageless Fashion Affair show on March 2. Photo: MiGen/John F. Martin Photography

Recovering Forgotten Trans History

Storyteller S. Bear Bergman, founder of first gay-straight alliance, brings 'The First Jew in Canada' to Ann Arbor church

BY SARAH BRICKER HUNT

S. Bear Bergman has been a self-described "queer pain in the ass" since adolescence, when he helped found the first gay-straight alliance in the country in 1990 at age 15. Now a writer, performer and educator, Bergman continues his lifelong mission of advocating for the LGBTQ+ community through storytelling. His latest project, "The First Jew in Canada (A Trans Tale)," comes to Ann Arbor's First Unitarian Universalist Congregation on March 29, where he'll share the true story of Jacques LaFargue, a trans Jewish 18th century historical figure whose arrival to colonial Canada in 1738 has been frequently overlooked by historians.

BTL spoke with Bergman about his background in activism, what inspired this particular performance and why sharing trans histories matters now more than ever.

You've been involved in LGBTQ+ activism since you were a teenager. Can you tell us about those early experiences?

I am a writer and performer and educator and extremely long-time queer pain in the ass since I was a teenager when my friends and I founded the first ever gay-straight alliance, and I have been continuing to insist as hard as I can on queer celebration since then.

I was 15, and I was a student at Concord Academy in Concord, Massachusetts. At the time, my history teacher was Kevin Jennings, who then went on to found and become the executive director for a long time of GLSEN. We started the chapter because one of our friends and fellow students' mom came out as a lesbian, and this was in 1990.

It was clear to me then, as it is now, that young LGBTQ and two-spirit individuals need support of various kinds and encouragement of various kinds. They need to be welcomed and celebrated in all of the spaces in which they find themselves, very much including school.

Tell us about your storytelling show, "The First Jew in Canada." What's it about and why did you create it?

"The First Jew in Canada" is a true story about the first Jewish person known to the colonial record to have arrived in what we now call Canada. He was a transgender man, and this was 300 years ago. 1738 is when he arrives in Canada and I love this story, and also I'm mad about it, because I feel a lot of frustration that it wasn't available to me when I needed it.

Like all of that time when I couldn't figure out what I was supposed to be doing or why I was somehow doing everything wrong, I would have loved to know that there was literally one other person in the whole history of the world ever who was like me.

Why do you feel it's important to recover and share these kinds of trans histories?

One of the things that happened with colonization was that a lot of stories and concepts were purposefully and violently erased, including all of the knowledge and stories about queer and trans people who had existed in Indigenous society.

To some degree this show is a project about queer storytelling, but to some degree it is a little bit of an answer to the people who currently wish to act as though nobody was ever trans before Tuesday after breakfast.

It's hard to feel like you're a person with no history that you want to claim, and I think the erasure of queer and trans stories creates this very difficult reality, especially for younger or more newly out queer and trans people, where it sort of seems like you don't have any access to your culture, you don't have any access to your history. This history is not often passed down because queer and trans people usually have straight and cis parents.

S. Bear Bergman. Photo: Zoë Gemelli

How has it been touring with this show during a time of increasing anti-LGBTQ legislation and rhetoric?

Two things are simultaneously true. One, this is terrible and exhausting and murderous. And, also, I am accustomed. One of the things that is true for me as a person who's been out and yelling about queer and trans issues since the late 1980s is that I am accustomed. I have received death threats before, I have been protested, I have received hate mail.

See **Bear Bergman**, page 24

The Sound of Defiance

A new deep dive into music's role in LGBTQ+ progress reminds us that pop culture often leads the way in social change

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

What influence might artists like Chappell Roan, Billie Eilish and Kim Petras have on our world a decade from now? It's a legitimate question that could offer hope in these fraught, uncertain times. As Roan challenges expectations by venturing into country music as a gay woman — an evolving genre historically associated with conservative values — she joins other boundary-pushing artists in reshaping cultural landscapes. And then there's Lady Gaga's new release, "Mayhem," which serves as a powerful reminder of music's ability to create cultural safe spaces. As The Independent recently wrote, "Gaga's return to outsider-empowering form could not be more timely. At a moment when America's leaders seek to shove its marginalized citizens back into the shadows, she invites them back into the centre of the floor, celebrating their defiant differences in the bright strobe lighting."

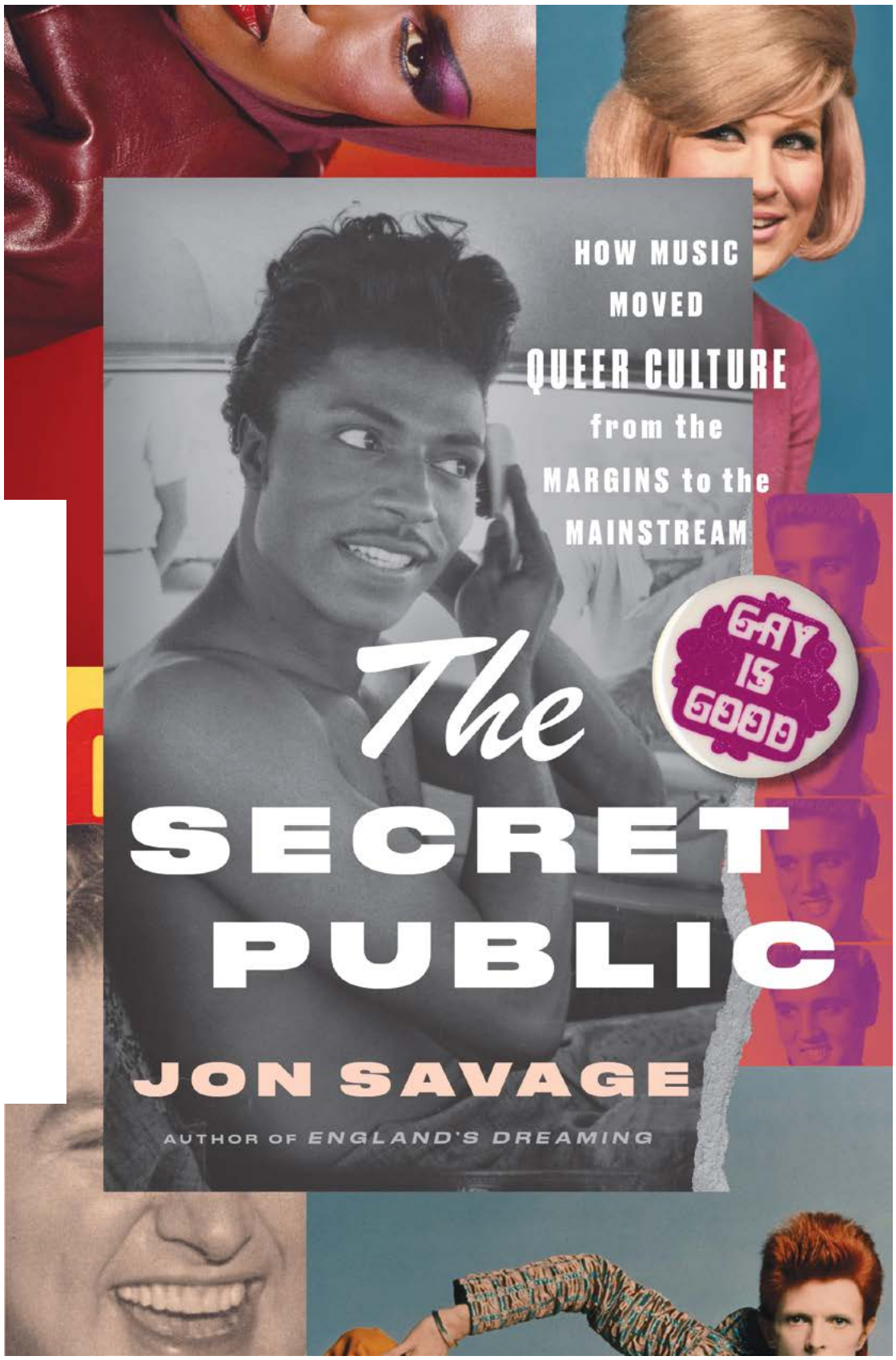
In today's climate, where anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric has found renewed prominence in political discourse since Trump's return to office, Jon Savage's insights become particularly relevant. The acclaimed British pop culture historian and journalist reminds us that fully comprehending our current circumstances requires us to examine the transformative musical movements that have helped shape LGBTQ+ history and progress. In other words, we need to listen closely to the revolutionary rhythms that will continue shaping the world around us.

When it comes to Roan, Eilish, Gaga and Taylor Swift, Savage suggests a future that would involve more women in leadership roles beyond those in music: "I'm a great admirer. And I would also observe that what's interesting compared to what it was back in my day is the fact that the cultural leaders are now young women, which I think is very interesting and very positive."

For now, Savage's new book, "The Secret Public: How Music Moved Queer Culture From the Margins to the Mainstream," provides an important historical account of LGBTQ+ treatment and contributions to music — music, he says, often precedes and shapes cultural shifts, particularly for LGBTQ+ visibility and rights. The book succinctly describes itself as "a searching examination of the fortitude and resilience of the gay community through the lens of popular music and culture."

> *"It is an angry book. It's obviously very pro-gay rights and also wishes to point out that LGBTQ+ people were treated appallingly at various parts in our recent history and still are, which is just absolutely unforgivable and still makes me very angry."*
>
> — Jon Savage, author of "The Secret Public"

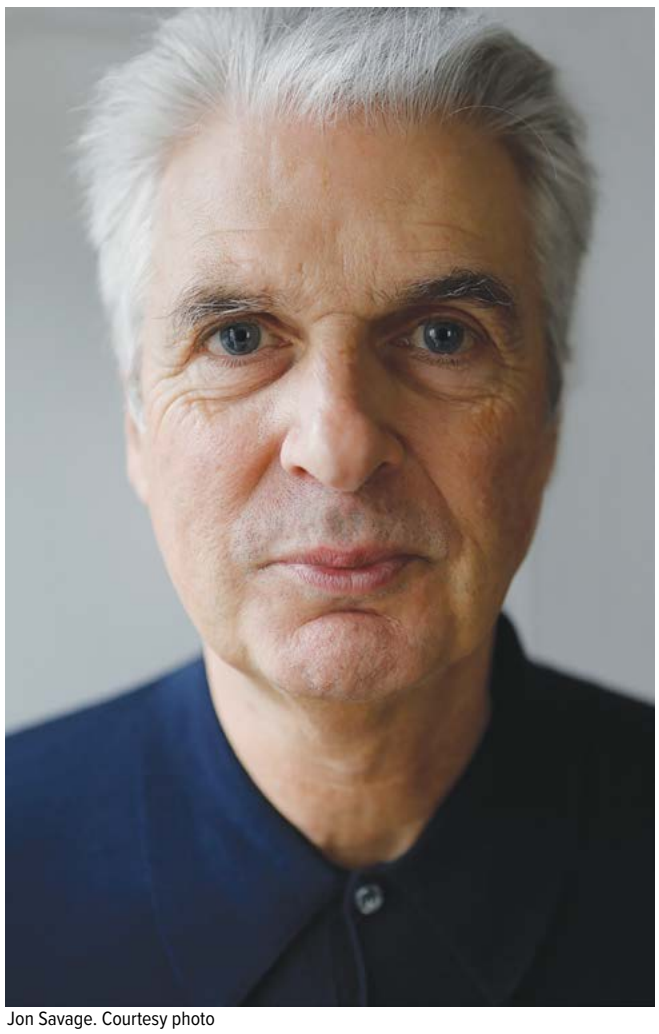
"I think music is ahead of politics," Savage told me recently. "So what does that mean? It means that music and popular culture can be an antiphony, particularly to oppressive power politics, and that's why a lot of us love it and are involved because it's things that



you can't say in the dominant culture, in the world of news, in the world of politics and in the world of, indeed, oppression."

The term "antiphony" here refers to music and popular culture serving as a responsive counterpart to oppressive systems — creating alternative spaces for expression when mainstream channels are closed off. This concept of call-and-response between power structures and cultural resistance is central to Savage's analysis of how LGBTQ+ communities have historically used music as both refuge and platform.

The book, spanning 769 pages, is more of a tome — as if to say, there's no such thing as documenting too much. And now it's one, he says, that serves a greater purpose as the LGBTQ+ community and our history faces erasure due to the Trump administration. "I could not have seen that this would happen, that this would be the climate that the book comes out in," he said, adding that its release is "an act of faith" on the part of his American publisher, Robert Weil, the executive editor and vice resident of the publishing imprint W. W. Norton / Liveright.


Jon Savage. Courtesy photo

"The Secret Public" covers a 24-year period, from 1955 to 1979, crucial years in LGBTQ+ history because it was the formalized beginning of a movement for gay men who began fighting for visibility, but, as Savage says, were "treated so badly." This period encompasses watershed moments like the Stonewall riots of 1969 and the emergence of openly gay public figures in entertainment and politics.

"A friend of mine said to me, which surprised me, 'You know, you've written a very angry book,' and I thought, well, actually, I probably have." Savage's anger, perhaps, reflects the righteous indignation that often fuels social movements, particularly when documenting historical systematic oppression and the creative resistance that emerges in response.

"It is an angry book," he admitted. "It's obviously very pro-gay rights and also wishes to point out that LGBTQ+ people were treated appallingly at various parts in our recent history and still are, which is just absolutely unforgivable and still makes me very angry."

Savage says that growing up in the 1960s and '70s "was no picnic for me — the shit, really, to be honest." Fiery emotions, then, seem only natural. But, at the same time, he notes the contradiction that "you had all these fabulous people having incredibly cool self-esteem, which played out by hating themselves because they were gay or becoming alcoholics, just because of stupid prejudice — and that made me absolutely mad."

Savage's book opens in November 1955 with Little Richard, who came out and then went back into the closet after becoming a born-again Christian. Savage writes that Richard's "very appearance and sound made sex and gender difference part of the pop package."

It goes on to explore Elvis Presley, who took a page out of Richard's book with his seductive hip gyrations during a time when it was "open season on homosexuals, sex deviates and all those who did not cleave to narrow definitions of normality."

In the early '60s, Savage, who says he prefers his pop music in any era to be less ordinary and, instead, "fifth gender from outer space," found himself deeply immersed in a world that felt both electrifying and liberating. He was captivated by young male

See **Jon Savage**, page 26

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Being a caregiver is rewarding
Being a caregiver is challenging
Being a caregiver is valuable
Being a caregiver is stressful
Supporting you as a caregiver.
As a caregiver, you are helping your aging parent, spouse, or friend with tasks both big and small. At The Senior Alliance, we understand the responsibility and compassion that caregiving requires—and we're here to offer our support.
Our Caregiving Haven is the one-stop source for guidance, tools, and resources you need to feel empowered as a caregiver. Get the support you deserve by visiting caregivinghaven.org or by calling 734.722.2830.

CREEP OF THE WEEK

Instead of Yelling at Clouds, an Old Man in Wisconsin Voices Support for Rainbows

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

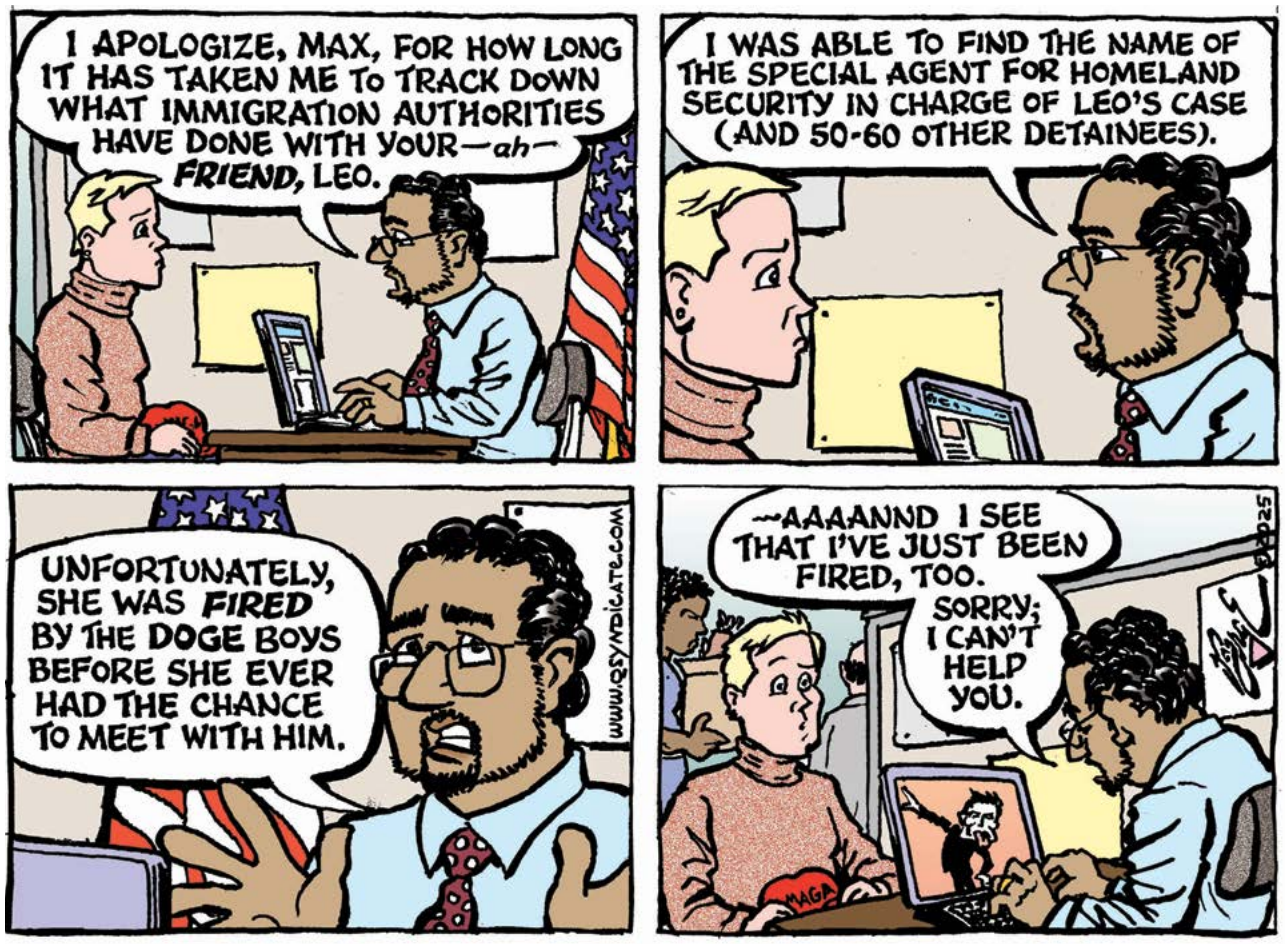
Hello and welcome to yet another day of the horrifying reality show none of us can escape from: the "Destroy the U.S." edition of "The Apprentice." Trump and co-president Elon Musk are laying off thousands and thousands of the people who literally make this country function.

Because the goal is for the country to not function at all. Not for people like you and me, that is. The Trump-Musk Administration is working overtime, however, to make the U.S. a playground for the richest, most craven people in the country, everyone else be damned.

Like, literally damned. This country is being run by people who believe in the prosperity gospel: God rewards good people by making them rich and punishes bad people by making them poor. It's a pretty convenient way to get around all of that "love thy neighbor" stuff.

It is soul-crushing to see news story after news story about Republicans hurting people and then celebrating that hurt.

So instead of bad news, I'm going to give you some good news for a change.


I APOLOGIZE, MAX, FOR HOW LONG IT HAS TAKEN ME TO TRACK DOWN WHAT IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES HAVE DONE WITH YOUR—ah— FRIEND, LEO.
I WAS ABLE TO FIND THE NAME OF THE SPECIAL AGENT FOR HOMELAND SECURITY IN CHARGE OF LEO'S CASE (AND 50-60 OTHER DETAINEES).
UNFORTUNATELY, SHE WAS FIRED BY THE DOGE BOYS BEFORE SHE EVER HAD THE CHANCE TO MEET WITH HIM.
WWW.GSYNDICATE.COM
—AAAANND I SEE THAT I'VE JUST BEEN FIRED, TOO.
SORRY; I CAN'T HELP YOU.
MAGA

> *In a time when everyone seems so divided, it is worth remembering that not everyone's hearts and minds have been poisoned irredeemably with hate.*

Allow me to take you to a hearing of the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care in Wisconsin about Assembly Bill 104.

AB 104 would ban gender-affirming care, including prescribing puberty-blocking drugs or gender-affirming surgery, for those under 18, reports the Wisconsin Examiner. "It would also require revocation of a medical provider's license found to be providing the care. It is the fourth bill focused on transgender youth in Wisconsin to receive a hearing over the last two weeks."

FOUR anti-trans bills focused on kids. In TWO weeks. That's a hell of a lot of time for a legislative body to spend discussing whether or not trans kids are deserving of the medical care they need. Medical care that can save lives and give kids a chance to live as their authentic selves.

The hearing went for hours and hours and hours with people testifying for and against the bill.

One of those people was a Milwaukee man named Larry Jones who got his chance to speak after he'd waited for six hours in an overflow room that happened to be filled with a lot of people who were there to testify against the bill.

"First of all I would like to apologize to you people," Jones said in a TikTok video featuring his remarks before the committee. "I was invited here to give my support [for Bill 104]. I have very little knowledge of gay people and things like that there, so when I came here, my eyes were opened. I was one of the critics that sat on the side and made the decision there was only two genders, so I got an education that was unbelievable, and I don't know just exactly how to say this, but my perspective for people has changed. So I don't want to take up no more of your time. I'd like to apologize for being here and I learned a very lot about this group of people."

In other words, when sitting amongst transgender people and supporters in that overflow room, Jones listened. And learned. And changed his mind.

This reminds me of my wife's grandmother, Mary. She was 94 when my wife and I got married in 2003. We invited her. And she initially said she wasn't going. But then closer to our wedding date, Mary overheard her two children, Gary and Joan, making plans to go. And she said, a little hurt, "Well, why can't I go?" And Gary, my wife's dad, said, "Of course you can go. You're the one who said you weren't going." And go she did. Six years later when we had our son, she was overjoyed to meet him. She died at age 105.

In a time when everyone seems so divided, it is worth remembering that not everyone's hearts and minds have been poisoned irredeemably with hate.

As far as AB 104, it was passed by the committee along party lines with all 10 Republicans voting in favor and all 5 Democrats voting against.

Thankfully, Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers, a Democrat, will almost certainly veto the bill if it gets to his desk. According to the Examiner, Evers "vetoed a similar bill last session, and vowed to LGBTQ+ youth in January to continue vetoing any bill that 'makes Wisconsin a less safe, less inclusive, and less welcoming place.'"

I first heard of this story via Mercury Stardust, a.k.a. the Trans Handy Ma'am on Instagram.

By the way, Ms. Stardust is working to raise $1 million for trans health. You can help her reach that goal by donating whatever you can today.

THE SCROLL

QUICK HITS & CAN'T MISSES

Jason Morgan Leads Effort to Strike Down Marriage Ban in Michigan

Michigan State Rep. Jason Morgan (D-Ann Arbor) has introduced House Joint Resolution F to remove language from the state constitution that defines marriage exclusively as between one man and one woman. The resolution, introduced on March 5, would replace gendered marriage language with gender-neutral terminology.

"This fight is personal — for myself, our families, our friends and all Michiganders — because everyone deserves the right to marry the person they love," said Morgan, who is gay and married, at a press conference.

Morgan's resolution follows Republican Rep. Josh Schriver's introduction of a resolution calling for the U.S. Supreme Court to reconsider its 2015 Obergefell v. Hodges decision, which legalized same-sex marriage nationwide. While House Speaker Matt Hall indicated Schriver's resolution would not advance, Morgan remains concerned about potential threats to marriage equality.

The Democratic lawmaker cited Justice Clarence Thomas's calls to reconsider Obergefell and compared the situation to the overturning of Roe v. Wade. "When people show you who they are, believe them. It's time to act with conviction to protect people's rights before it's too late," Morgan said.

If Morgan's resolution passes both legislative chambers, Michigan voters would decide whether to remove the same-sex marriage ban from the state constitution.

Jason Morgan. Courtesy photo

Michigan Dems Face Backlash Over Anti-Trans Sports Resolution

Eight Michigan Democratic reps are facing criticism for supporting House Resolution 40, which urges the Michigan High School Athletics Association to comply with President Trump's executive order restricting transgender participation in school sports. Advocacy groups, including Equality Michigan Action Network, have condemned the resolution as discriminatory and politically motivated.

The MHSAA already has an individual waiver for transgender athletes, with only about two students annually requesting waivers among 180,000 athletes. Currently, zero transgender girls have waivers for winter and spring sports.

The resolution may violate Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination based on gender identity. Advocacy groups encourage concerned citizens to contact the reps who support the measure: Tullio Liberati, Alabas Farhat, Mai Xiong, Peter Herzberg, Reggie Miller, Denise Mentzer, Angela Witwer and Will Snyder. Call the House of Reps at 517-373-8080 to be directed to individual offices.

Attend Community Events for Transgender Day of Visibility

Get set to commemorate International Transgender Day of Visibility, founded by Michigander Rachel Crandall Crocker. On March 28, Five15 in Royal Oak will present "TRANSFORM: A Night of Power, Performance & Pride." This fundraising event will benefit the ACLU's work for transgender rights, featuring Mimi Southwest and ACLU attorney Jay Kaplan.

"TRANSFORM is more than entertainment — it's action. At Five15, we stand with the trans community by raising visibility, funds and awareness. Every ticket and tip donation supports the ACLU's fight for equality. We want guests to leave inspired, informed and ready to make a difference," Five15 owner Gary Baglio told BTL. Visit Five15.net.

On March 30, Inclusive Justice Michigan, Equality Michigan, Gender Identity Network Alliance and Stand with Trans will host a community rally at the Lansing Capital Building at 2 p.m. The gathering aims to uplift, amplify and celebrate transgender individuals through community solidarity. Visit facebook.com/InclusiveJusticeMichigan.

Celebrate Jadein Black's Birthday

Mark your calendars for Sunday, March 23 at Sidetrack Bar and Grille in Ypsilanti, where drag artist extraordinaire Jadein Black celebrates her birthday month while raising essential funds for Ann Arbor Pride. Doors open at noon for a vibrant showcase featuring three dazzling sets of performances beginning at 12:30 p.m. With 18 years of artistic excellence and community advocacy under her belt, Jadein continues to inspire through creativity and resilience. Come experience the magic, passion and, yes, a touch of glitter!

National LGBTQ+ Health Awareness Week

Each March, National LGBTQ+ Health Awareness Week emphasizes "Health Equity NOW," highlighting the urgent need for improved healthcare access within the LGBTQ+ community, particularly seniors facing intersectional challenges of ageism and discrimination. The initiative addresses the lack of culturally competent care. MiGen, Michigan's LGBTQ+ Elders Network, encourages community members to visit healthlgbtq.org/awareness-week for resources supporting awareness, education and advocacy efforts.

Yippee-Ki-Gay: The Wiggles Saddle Up With Orville

Australian children's icons The Wiggles embrace LGBTQ+ visibility in their new campy country album "Wiggle Up, Giddy Up!" with standout track "Friends of Dorothy," featuring out gay masked singer Orville Peck. The collaboration proudly declares "Dorothy girl, you are fierce!" in a celebratory anthem perfect for little ones and parents alike. Queer icon Dolly Parton also appears on the album, cementing The Wiggles' rainbow-bright commitment to inclusivity in children's entertainment.

Orville Peck. Photo: Instagram

Margaret Cho, in Beast Mode

Having lived through the 1980s, the trailblazing comedian and musician has a lot to say about these uncertain times

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Margaret Cho's new album, her first in eight years, might take some people by surprise — especially those who don't know that her talents stretch far beyond comedy. But if you've followed her 30-plus-year career, one deeply intertwined with LGBTQ+ activism, the inspiration behind one of the LP's standout tracks, "You Can Be You," will ring all too familiar.

The song is a tribute to the trans and nonbinary communities, and it was written in response to the tragic 2024 death of Nex Benedict, a trans nonbinary teen. Their death, a consequence of systemic failures, left Cho shattered. But in the face of that grief, Cho turned her heartbreak into something powerful — a song that's as much about mourning as it is about defiance. The message is simple but profound: "You can be you."

Cho, 56, has always used her voice — whether it's the sharp humor that built her career or the unflinching activism that runs through her bones — to break down barriers for marginalized groups. Her new album, rooted in '90s female rocker-folk vibes (think Lilith Fair with a modern twist), also taps into the cultural power of gay pop. It's a collection of songs that feel both deeply personal and politically charged.

This isn't Cho's first foray into music. Her 2010 debut album "Cho Dependent" earned her a Grammy nomination for Best Comedy Album, featuring collaborations with big names like Fiona Apple, Patty Griffin, Andrew Bird, and Tegan and Sara. That project set the stage for what would become a unique blend of comedy and music, with Cho tackling serious issues in her own inimitable style.

Now, with her third album — following up "American Myth" from 2016 (which also earned her a Grammy nomination, bringing her total to five) — Cho shows how much she's evolved as both an artist and an activist. The new album, released under her own Clownery Records label, feels like the culmination of decades of growth. On the title track, Cho plays her signature "mandotar," a double-neck mandolin-guitar hybrid that adds a personal touch to the sound.

I recently sat down with Cho to talk about the ongoing fight for LGBTQ+ rights and the role comedy plays in today's volatile political climate. Having lived through the AIDS crisis and the Reagan years, Cho's perspective is priceless. She knows exactly how far we've come — and how far we still have to go — and how music and comedy remain essential tools to help us through it all.

As one of the most fearless and consistent LGBTQ+ advocates of the past four decades, your activism has spanned multiple eras of struggle and progress. How does your unique perspective help you contextualize today's challenges for the community?

We've had this before and we were fighting a deadly pandemic. During AIDS, the environment was the same. We had even less rights and we were dying from the inside out with no help from the government who were actually spreading this idea that we brought this upon ourselves — it was God's will.

We need to just be assured that we are OK. We're going to be OK. It's just a really horrifying time. I don't know exactly how it got here, but we don't have to comply with anything. We don't have to go along with the hatred. We can actually just be rooted in our self-love and take care of each other.

So ultimately this is not the worst of it. It could be so much worse, as it was so much worse then. How much of our community we lost at that time, and the incredible sense of hopelessness that existed.

Margaret Cho. Photo: Nick Spanos

But now we have made such huge political strides because of that era, because of the intense activism from ACT UP and all those wonderful grassroots organizations. Now, we already have a foundation of political action that we've built for 60, 70 years and longer. So there's hope. The strategy of the right is to overwhelm us with this idea that, well, it's over. Woke is over. But it's not.

Or that woke is new.

Woke is not new. It's never been new. It's been around as long as unwoke.

Reflecting on the '80s, what brought you hope then and what is bringing you hope now?

Well, humor. Humor and the way that we make strides with what we have, and we've always had drag to rely on during that era. In the '80s, there were all sorts of drag shows that were calling attention to what was going on. There was also punk-rock shows. We had Rock Against Reagan and Rock Against Racism, where you would see bands like the Dead Kennedys and you'd see just incredible activism within punk rock and other music and all these communities coming together to support each other. That's what gave me hope.

The die-ins were ACT UP, and people were laying in the street to just show, We are dying, we are dying. We're going to stop everything and show everybody what's happening. So the inability for the mainstream to deny us life was the fighting in so many ways. So I think the quilts that we see now are a celebration of all of these lives and put to fabric, put to this very old time-y American art form. Those kinds of things I think collectively brought us to where we are. So that gives

See **Margaret Cho**, page 18

What Is It Really Like to Be a Queer Musician in Michigan?

How these artists have navigated a sometimes-difficult space for LGBTQ+ people — the stage

BY LIAM CLYMER

Kate Peterson of "Nervous But Excited." Courtesy photo

With the recent rise of its princess, Chappell Roan, the Midwest's music scene has gained newfound attention. Roan's journey to the top wasn't exactly smooth, and each musician's story is unique. What might have seemed like a straightforward path to superstardom for some has proven to be a more complex journey for others — especially fellow LGBTQ+ creatives.

For independent musician Aziz Olivine, who hails from Metro Detroit, that path through the Midwest was marked by uncertainty and restraint. "Being from the Midwest was stunting me," Olivine recalled. "[I was] constantly being around people who made me feel small, unimportant or like I couldn't be myself and be free because they didn't believe in queerness."

Despite these challenges, the same conditions also sparked feelings that fueled Olivine's creative drive and ultimately gave him a new sense of purpose. "Growing up queer, I made it a mission to free myself in every way," Olivine told BTL.

Olivine's go-to artists were more than just folks to sing along to — looking back, he said, they were a lifeline. "I've always resorted to music as an escape in every situation. I love artists that create healing atmospheres that I can be inside, introduce into my space and use to regulate myself."

Drawing from his own experiences, Olivine knew exactly what his work needed to convey. "[I want to] be playful with it," he said. "I think people can be so rigid in the ways that they think. By freeing myself, I'm able to put my energy into music and do it the way I want to, so people can connect."

> *"By putting your essence into your work, and your unique point of view, you can make something beautiful."*
>
> — Michigan-born queer musician Aziz Olivine

"My intention is to create music that's healing and that can bring people out of their fight or flight nervous system state because I know that I needed that and I got that," he added.

But Olivine isn't the only Michigan artist to place emphasis on connecting with LGBTQ+ community members.

Kate Peterson, a member of prominent queer folk duo Nervous But Excited, which was formed in 2006, told BTL that a strong LGBTQ+ community presence in Michigan was the backbone responsible for her successful musical career.

"We had a very positive experience being out and playing in Michigan and touring the country," Peterson said. "We were well received by lots of different queer groups, queer college organizations and the various queer-oriented music festivals that we played. Honestly, we have that community to thank for being the basis of our careers."

"Our trajectory would have looked very different without the queer community — they were the heart of it, honestly," she added.

Peterson suggested that the sense of safety present in the atmosphere at Nervous But Excited's performances came from a foundation built upon mutual respect. "Communication is important as a human — we always did want to establish a connection with the audience," she said. "I don't know that we were necessarily trying to create that space. I think it happened pretty naturally."

And while the friendly banter Peterson often exchanged with audience members and her creative partner Sarah Cleaver may not be the experience of everyone,

See **Midwestern Spotlight**, page 17

An Ode to Kim Petras: Why America Needs More Trans Pop Stars

The power of trans voices in shaping society's perceptions

BY JAMIE VALENTINO

Kim Petras. Photo: Renee Dominguez for Getty Images

I was once putting my new sex playlist to the test when my hookup paused to point out that it was exclusively Kim Petras. I clarified that it was Kim Petras' 2022 "Slut Pop" album, which, looking back, might have been excessive to let repeat three times. But again, I was preoccupied, which is beside the point.

"I didn't know she made so much sex music," the guy said.

In reality, it was an album celebrating sex, which is why I chose it. But she made a spectrum of pop. "Slut Pop" is immaculate for what it's meant to be, at least if you're not easily offended by raunchy language. If any radical conservative heard this album, with tracks like "Throat Goat," "Treat Me Like a Slut" and "They Wanna Fuck," they might argue their worst fears about transness are true.

Ironically, I think it's one of the greatest albums of all time — at least within its niche for humans who admit to being horny. Petras owns her sexual agency and delivers bangers; she doesn't care if you clutch your pearls. She has never held back her vision as an artist, external transphobia be damned.

Right now, America feels far from being ready to embrace a sex-positive trans artist the way it did for Lil Nas X and Cardi B. It took a long time for gay men and straight women to be able to sing about sex the same way straight male rappers have for centuries. Petras is a legend for making such a big name for herself without a filter. And I think despite the nation taking three steps back on its march to equality, music can help bridge the dots of connection.

For this reason, the industry needs more trans pop stars. I don't need to preach to the choir about what's happening in the country. However, while it's scary for the entire LGBTQ+ community and our allies, it's hard to deny that trans people seem to be holding a majority stake in the hate. I believe music and fandom are transcendent enough to make people care about another identity, even as the U.S. government sets equality ablaze.

It's hard to deny the mountains people will move for a celebrity they like, and resonating with a trans artist's music could be the first step toward allyship. Just look at history: In the 1950s and '60s, Tom of Finland used illustrations of erect, leather-clad men to normalize gayness in the art world during a time when it was illegal, and in the 1980s, Keith Haring embedded political messages in his paintings to spread awareness about AIDS when the government ignored it. Lil Nas X's "Montero" and Cardi B's "WAP" can serve as modern musical examples of normalizing sexuality through shock value.

Of course, this isn't to say Petras hasn't belted out pop hits without the horn (my favorite is "Icy"). But if she had feared her sexuality, she wouldn't have been the first trans woman to win a Grammy for "Unholy" with Sam Smith. She's not a conventional artist, and that has nothing — and perhaps everything — to do with her being trans. Her discography is bonkers. As a gay man, I might not see myself in the details of a trans woman's struggle, but we dance to the same beat. Her songs don't manifest as anthems of transness but of power.

While I have friends who liberate themselves from gender norms in fashion and embrace a nonbinary way of showing up, I don't have anyone close to me who is trans. That's why I find it shocking that Republicans have tried to scapegoat all of the country's problems on less than 2% of the population. Or maybe the scarcity of trans people to defend themselves is what they're counting on.

I applaud Petras for being the baddest trans artist to ever do it, even if her success may have provided ammunition for the current wave of hateful rhetoric. Still, just as family values didn't go up in smoke when Cardi B sang about her lubricated vagina, Petras has helped show us that trans joy in all its raunchiness won't blow up the patriarchy.

More trans artists are necessary in the same way an artist like Chappell Roan has made it impossible for most people to claim they don't like at least one lesbian. Music doesn't need a social agenda to make a positive social impact. Roan compared her signature makeup look to clown makeup because bullies used to call queer people clowns at her high school. And yet, her stardom doesn't feel burdened by her sexuality, and the widespread discourse surrounding her celebrates a young musical talent.

In many ways, Roan's story indicates how far we've come: the world's most prominent female pop star sings about getting eaten out by another woman in the back of a car in "Casual," and it didn't even steal a sliver of attention from her music. But that's largely thanks to a history of queer artists willing to make their love lives press talking points, including Petras slowly but surely clawing her way up a landslide of prejudice, leaving a trail for trans pop artists behind her.

To me, fighting for trans rights is the last frontier for queer rights, and Congress is not the only place where the seeds of change can be planted. Permeating someone's Spotify playlist can have lasting ripple effects. So, yes, this is a love letter to Petras for being iconic. But let it also serve as an invitation for trans artists to use their talent to erase the distance separating humanity.

Jamie is a freelance writer and creative strategist fascinated by the idiosyncrasies of culture, trends and the human spirit. His work has been published in Business Insider, WIRED and Men's Journal.

Continued from page 15

her advice on how to approach tense circumstances remains grounded in the same sense of decency. "We led with kindness everywhere we went and we were met with it," she said.

J.Plantana. Courtesy photo

Though, for others carving out safe spaces, it has to be done more deliberately.

For the past year, J.Plantana's official day job has been curating live music events in Lansing with her production company Night Alliance, but the pop and rap artist has been fostering creative collaborations for longer than that.

Late in October 2023, while nearby students at Michigan State University were busy finding last minute Halloween costumes, J.Plantana was caught up in a different kind of autumn planning — sussing out the entertainment.

At popular Lansing dive Mac's Bar, J.Plantana debuted — and performed as a apart of — "Compound Kinetics," a fem, non-binary led rap and R&B group. She has continued to emphasize the importance of artists using their platforms to provide space for other marginalized groups.

"I think it's important, especially now with the Trump administration and all these crazy things happening, to show that we're not going anywhere — not just for the point, but to also reinforce those spaces when they're being threatened," she said.

J.Plantana argued that queer viewpoints align with those of an activist and that oftentimes that perspective comes out through her art.

"I write a lot about struggles, about the state of the world around me and coping with that as someone who is highly empathetic, and sometimes my identity does play an influence there," she said. "I think a lot of queer people feel the same because I think they recognize injustice from a young age against their own self and people around them. It contributes to maybe viewing the world in more of a critical lens and perhaps challenging social norms."

Olivine agreed placing oneself in their work is what makes queer music special. "By putting your essence into your work, and your unique point of view, you can make something beautiful," he said.

Meanwhile, after making a spontaneous move over a year ago, Olivine now finds himself inspired by the diverse voices surrounding him in Brooklyn. Looking ahead, Olivine said he's no longer holding any part of himself back.

"I want to incorporate more Middle Eastern inspiration into my upcoming work," he said. "Reclaiming my Palestinian Arab culture as a queer person has been a journey — and it's not easy attempting to find community and to accept myself as a Palestinian even though I grew up surrounded by white American culture. I've shied away from that side of myself, but it's part of me and it's been a part of me my entire life."

"I don't want to survive," he added. "I want to thrive."

Aziz Olivine. Artwork by Aziz Olivine

Continued from page 14

me hope. And what gives me hope now is humor. It's activism, it's life, it's the fact that we are protesting in our own ways and resisting in our own ways, on social media and everywhere.

This album feels deeply connected to a sound you truly love, with clear influences like Patty Griffin. I'm definitely picking up on those '90s women rocker-folk vibes, especially the Lilith Fair energy. What inspired you to create this record?

You know when VH1 had two channels? They would show all of the coffeehouse artists. I loved that. I love that era of Ani DiFranco and, of course, Patty Griffin. She is amazing and one of my idols. So yeah, I wanted to do an album that was very melodic, but also kind of power pop, and then also hearkened back to '90s women, whether that was bands like The Breeders or Belly or anything that was kind of just Lilith Fair. Anything like Sinead O'Connor.

I actually did a show once with Sarah McLachlan at a rock festival. I tried to pass her a filthy roach. We were all smoking weed and I tried to pass her, the beautiful Sarah McLachlan, a nasty roach. She looked at me and was like, no, thank you. She looked at me like I was one of those animals in a shelter. Like I was a little Maltese with one eye. Like, "That is so sad, but also so darling that you were trying to pass me this nasty roach." [Laughs.]

I love to make music and I really worked hard on my voice for this. I was really excited to be able to finally compose quite a few tracks. I've usually relied on musicians to help me compose music, but this is the first time that I actually came at it as a composer, which was very new, so I'm really grateful for the ability to do that.

You described the song "Lucky Gift" as gay pop. How do you define gay pop?

I hope that song gets on the soundtrack of a film like "The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants." It should be in "Legally Blonde 5," when they're in the car, hair blowing in the wind, in the convertible — that kind of vibe. To me, gay pop, of course, is JoJo Siwa, but also Chappell Roan and Sabrina Carpenter. It's Tate McCrae, who I love. It's the great pop divas, but also the gay pop diva goes deep. It's Ani DiFranco, original gay pop, or even Courtney Love. Maybe it's Dusty Springfield as well, or Nancy Sinatra and Tracy Ullman. Tracy Ullman is where I got sort of the idea of the look. I love her and I love when comedians do music and good music, in particular.

So, for me, gay pop is essential. I think it's the way that, as queer people, we can keep on surviving — with our pop music. We need a Beyoncé, we need a Taylor. We need our pop divas. I think that as gay people, we need our pop divas so much more. It's like a religion. They almost are like saints. We go to our pop divas for comfort, but it's solace and it's sanctuary. It is true relief. That's what we need our pop divas for, because we have to deal with so much in life that it's a blessing that we can get so much from their art.

Your song "You Can Be You," an anthem for nonbinary and gender non-conforming people, is especially poignant right now. What's the story behind that song?

That was written the day that Nex Benedict died. Nex was a trans nonbinary teen who was so failed by the state of Oklahoma, by the board of education, by the school and by the staff at the school. They were essentially murdered by the system there, and so the way that I really grieved their death and the inhumanity of people after — continuing to misgender, continuing to make fun of this person, continuing to lie and use it for this political advantage somehow and to further dehumanize our community — I couldn't sleep for days. I was so angry and so disgusted by what we had become as a nation, and so I decided to work on the song. I really wanted to say, "What would I say to them?" "You can be you," the most powerful thing. That no matter all of this inhumanity that's existing, you can still be you in the face of that. So that's, for me, a really special song and one that I hope all of our baby gays get to listen to and gain something from.

You've shattered countless barriers for both Asian American and queer performers. What advice would you offer to this generation of emerging marginalized artists who are working to carve out space for themselves in a political landscape that seems to be deprioritizing them once again?

Well, we need them. We need more voices. We need more people to fill our ranks. It's almost like a draft. I want to draft all of these young queer artists to come and join, and we need them more than ever. Artists are the only people that can fight this. I think art is so critical, and when art is used as a weapon, it is so powerful, and so we can do this, but we can only do this together. And I think about people like Alok [Vaid-Menon], who is so special because they are coming at this with such compassion, wit and beauty — undeniable beauty — and I'm so impressed by an artist like that. They are, to me, on the forefront of how we're going to change minds and change views and change people because their views are so astonishingly poetic that it is a combination of poet, laureate, comedian — and supermodel! I'm really excited about Alok.

Margaret Cho. Photo: Nick Spanos

You were a major part of the 2024 documentary "Outstanding: A Comedy Revolution," which puts into historical context exactly what comedy can do for a political movement. How do you think comedians such as yourself will meet the moment now and in the next few years?

Well, I loved "Outstanding," and thank you. I love that I got to spend time with Robin Tyler [the first out lesbian on national TV]. I've known Robin personally for a long time, yet I had no idea about her career before I even met her as a friend. These older lesbians hold multitudes. [Laughs.] She did so much and I had no idea because she's so modest.

Also, the film allowed me to spend a great deal of time with Sandra Bernhard, who is my North Star, my friend. I'm a Bernardologist, so every time I spend time with her, I'm like, "Oh, don't forget, this thing you did had a huge impact." To me, that film is such herstory and also allowed me to reconnect again with the new generation of people like Joel Kim Booster, who's my biological son. [Laughs.]

You both being in "Fire Island" together was such a highlight.

Yeah, I love that film. It's where I gave birth to him shortly before we made the movie, [laughs], so it was a really great experience for us to do that as mother and son.

It was an easy birth, right?

[Laughs.] It was such an easy birth. It was a water birth. We did it right off the coast of Fire Island. I was in the bay and I just squirted him out onto Cherry Grove and he came onto the rocks and we dried him off.

He was quite literally born a comedian.

[Laughs.] My biology! He and I really laugh because it is almost biological — we look the same! Also, we have a really crazy ability to show our bodies at all times. [Laughs.] His body's much better than mine, but I'm going to show mine anyway. But I love that film, and I can't wait to see Andrew Ahn's new film, "The Wedding Banquet." I love Andrew. They're all my children. Andrew, Bowen, Conrad Ricamora and, of course, Joel.

Comedy is being challenged in this current political era. How do comedians interact with this era?

It's actually a good opportunity to use comedy as a weapon, as our own battering ram, because the thing about the Trump administration in particular — and Trump, Elon, the bro-oligarchy — is they hate to be made fun of and they wish they were funny, but they're painfully unfunny. No matter what attempt that they do to make any kind of joke, it falls flat, constantly, and they know that. So that's why Trump has always attacked comedians. That's why he wants to have control of the FCC because he wants to make sure that these late-night hosts are not talking about him, but they will never stop because they know he hates it. Elon is so painfully sensitive about being made fun of, which is why it's so imperative for all comedians to really rise to the occasion, and you have to use it like an onslaught. Use shock and awe, as many jokes as possible, at their expense because that's the one thing they can't pay for. No amount of money in the world is going to buy a sense of humor. It's just the best.

It's really a good opportunity to just batter them senseless with a barrage of jokes that they'll never recover from, and that's our form of war. In my mind, I have gone to war in my comedy. I have a strategy. It's almost military. I wake up every morning and I write a joke about what's happening, and that really sets up the rest of my day of how I'm going to go about it, and then I try it out where I go, and I think it's really soothing [laughs]. So comedians are going to be attacked, but they can't kill all of us. They can't imprison all of us, and even if we're sent away, whatever they do with us, there will be another one to rise up in our place.

You'll just give birth to more comedians.

[Laughs.] I'm freezing all of my eggs now to make sure we'll have so many. All of my biological children will do it for us.

You launched the Live and Livid tour last year before the election. You'll be resuming that tour with Trump now definitively president. How will that change the show?

Well, there was so much of a sense of hope. I think what's so disappointing is that the Harris-Walz campaign allowed me to have hope. I am so disappointed, but then you can use that as an advantage in writing and in responding. I just loved working on the Kamala campaign. I loved being a part of that energy, and I don't regret having hope. I don't regret having hope for this country. I still have hope. And the thing about it is that it wasn't really that much of a loss. If you think about it as a loss, it's not really a loss. It wasn't a defeat in the sense that it was such a minimal defeat, and that only became real because so many people didn't vote and the fact that it was literally won on anti-trans rhetoric. It was them really going after just the idea of a trans community. Just the idea of a they/them. And so, to me, that is a personal attack.

Is there less hope in the show now? More lividness?

It's more about finding hope now and discovering where that strength is. It's not that there's less hope, but there's more of a need to find the strength within and also more of a need to get real crass and bring out — and unfortunately, I have to use it — the big guns.

Gloves are off. Really. I'm going for it. I'm really letting them have it, especially [Speaker of the U.S. House] Mike Johnson. Mike Johnson, for some reason, has really become my special "Ohh, I hate him" [subject]. [Laughs.]

He's become your comedic muse?

[Laughs.] He's become my muse. I'm really giving it to that little bottom. I'm so into it. It's just brought out of me this animal rage that I appreciate that I haven't had. I didn't have it during the Bush era. Didn't have it, of course, during Obama, who I love. Even during the first Trump era. For me, I'm reaching all new lows. I'm below the belt. Which I'm excited about, personally, as an artist. This has drawn out something of a beast.

In this era, we really have to be dom tops — or at least more vers.

You have to be more vers. And vers tops are really in need at this point. [Laughs.]

For the next four years, at least.

In these uncertain times.

When Arabic Lyrics Become American Refuge: A Queer Veteran's Relationship with Mashrou' Leila

How the afterglow of the band is still a light in dark times

BY MELANIE CORINNE

"My history erased from our books like they were yours to claim
Our hips translated Sappho and Abu Nuwas in the tongue of oohs and aahs
On bed sheets embroidered with the same oohs and aahs we chanted at the picket line."
— "Tayf (Ghost)," Mashrou' Leila

I discovered Lebanese four-member indie rock band Mashrou' Leila while studying Arabic in the Marine Corps, desperate for Arabic language media that resonated with me. As a queer service member and artist — and especially as a millennial grappling with systemic overreach — I craved critical engagement and deeper meaning. Before disbanding in 2022 due, in part, to growing hostility toward them for their support of LGBTQ+ people, Mashrou' Leila's music fulfilled that desire over 14 years ago with their self-described "sensual electro-pop" vibes and fierce, raw lyrics that quickly became a staple of my daily routine.

Recently they've returned to my mix for reasons too obvious to state. Back when ISIS freshly dominated headlines, Mashrou' Leila made queer audiences in the Middle East feel seen, heard and hopeful — despite campaigns of fear and state violence. The irony is not lost on me, nor is a fierce sense of gratitude, that I'm currently feeling the same affirmation and empowerment that I naively thought American fans would never be in need of.

This indie band, born out of the American University of Beirut in 2008, spoke directly to queer communities, artists, activists and dreamers across the Middle East and across the world.

So what is the vibe when you turn on a Mashrou' Leila song?

It's like a drug. The beats are bright and airy, but smooth and invigorating at the same time. For non-Arabic speakers, Mashrou' Leila's lyrics become something else: a feeling, a vibration, a truth that the body absorbs before the mind. Even without translation, their music seeps into your skin down to your bones.

The first song I discovered was "Lil Watan" ("For the Country"), whose lyrics (translation by the Lebanese Arabic Institute) hit like a freight train, landing with bittersweet and scathing insight:

Hamed Sinno of Mashrou' Leila. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

"Others have tamed hurricanes to be in control of destiny
As for us, we are blown away by a breeze and fall back into destruction
If you dare question the deteriorating situation
They silence you with slogans about all the conspiracies

The [herd] accuse you of treason whenever you call for change to the nation
They caused you despair so that you sell your freedoms for the nation to not be lost
They taught you the anthem; they said your struggle is useful to the nation.
They drugged you in the vein; they said your lethargy is useful for the nation

They said to you,
Enough preaching, come dance with me a bit
Why are you frowning? Come dance with me a bit."

Too deep? Too painful? No worries — it's in Arabic. Just listen to your body, as each song seduces you to the tune of "machines, samples, razor-sharp violin and magnetic frontman Hamed Sinno's mercurial voice," according to the band via their YouTube channel. And mercurial is a good way to describe Sinno, whose lyrics and delivery hit like church confessions whispered into a megaphone.

Sinno, who is queer and non-binary, sings of intimate nights, self-doubt, regret, state violence, the dissonance between our inner and outer lives, and the relentless uncertainty of the future, all while our parasympathetic nerve vibes to the heady, surreal electro-pop beats that hit the body like a fever dream. This is club music. This is stay-at-home-and-get-high music. This is date-night-on-the-couch music. This is whatever you want it to be.

Their sound stokes the desire to celebrate whatever ephemeral moments of joy we can get, whether in spite of, or because of, the fact that the world always seems to be burning down around us. When Egyptian activist and writer Sarah Hegazy raised her Pride flag in celebration and defiance at Mashrou' Leila's 2017 Cairo concert, I have to believe she felt something similar.

More than anything, their music holds space for contradictions: resistance and pleasure, sorrow and celebration, intimacy and isolation.

"Kalam (S/He)," meaning "Words," is a lyrically gorgeous transgender anthem, celebrating creative word play, while never passing up an indictment of imperial or colonial systems:

"They wrote the country's borders (upon my body; upon your body)
In flesh-ligatured words
My word upon your word (as my body upon your body)
Flesh-conjugated words.
You feel me feeling what you feel
So why all the shame? just feel what you feel.

Your body conjugates
Your language separates
Your body separates
Your language conjugates"

Mashrou' Leila is a masterclass on balancing dissonant feelings — a practice where I've always felt the most human and the most vulnerable.

These days their music challenges me, reminding me that I can't wait for things to be easy to feel joy, to love myself, or to make my voice heard. Their poetic lyricism and dreamy sound syncs my body and mind in a way that rarely happens in my waking life. There's something holy in it — not in a religious sense, but in the way it strips away pretense and leaves only truth.

Their sound pulls me to a place where joy and resistance are as defiant as they are celebratory.

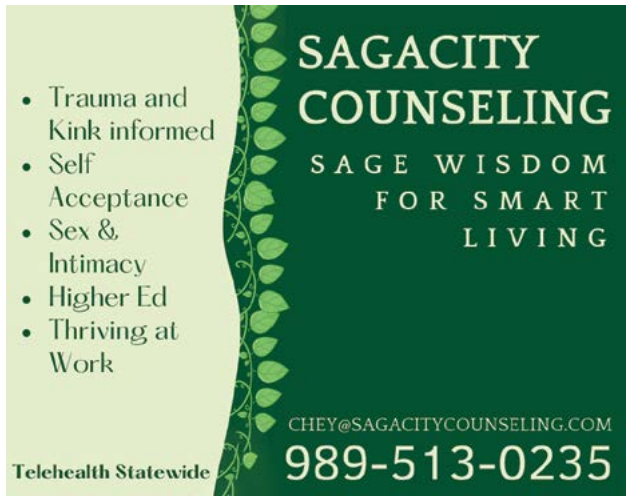
"Dress me up in smiles. Joy becomes me.
Whatever will be, just may be,
I'll still be standing here — singing my melody."
— Falyakon," Mashrou' Leila

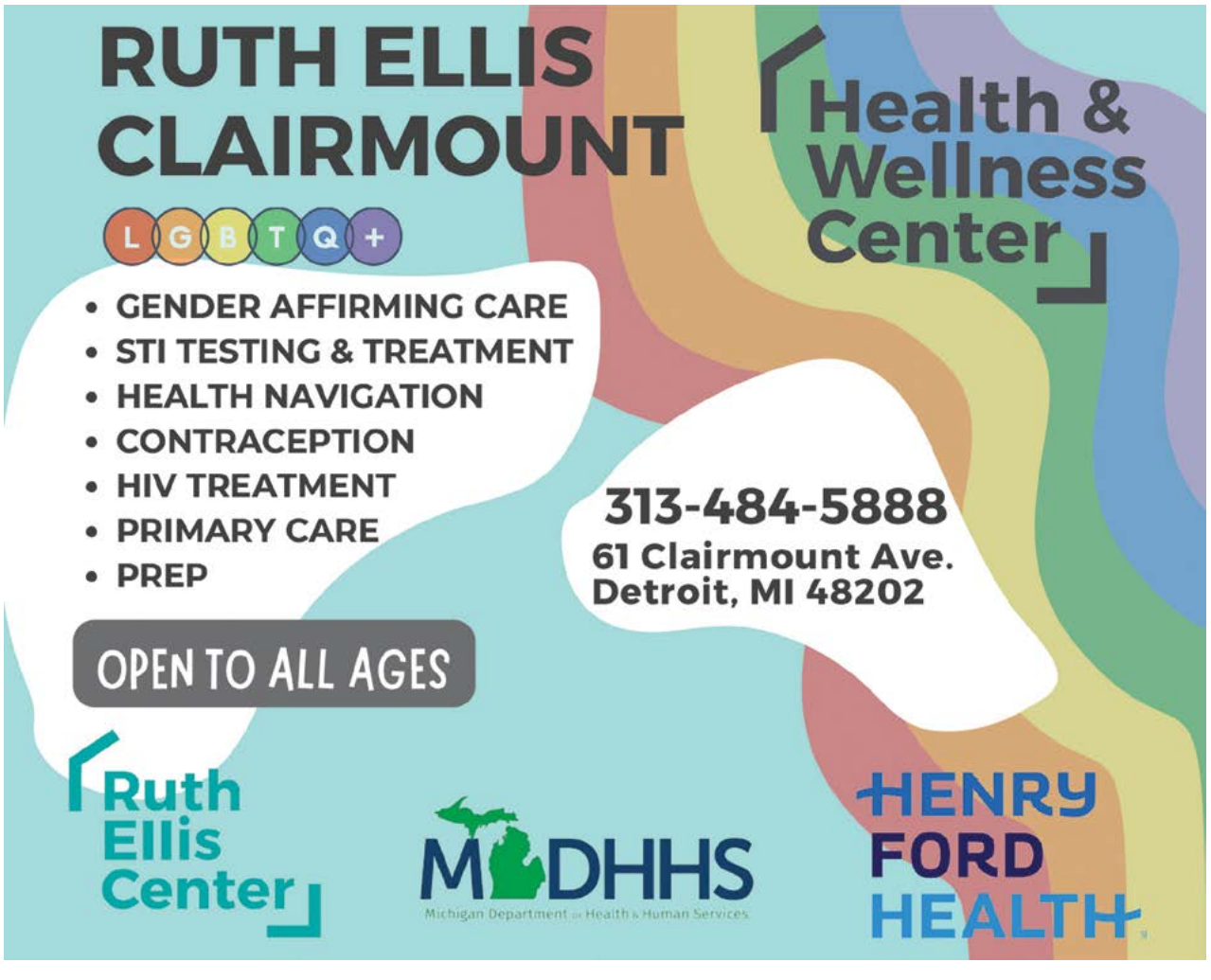
In 2013, I watched Mashrou' Leila push against the boundaries of Arab identity, giving voice to the silenced. I often wondered what my great grandfather, who fled Syria for Argentina, might think about my use of a queer Lebanese band to reclaim a sense of heritage. I never wondered why he fled. Arrogant from the 2011 repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," and the 2013 defeat of the Defense of Marriage Act, I still naively believed systemic oppression only happened to others (don't worry — the Marines quickly disabused me of that notion.)

Today Mashrou' Leila coaxes me to face each morning anew. I enjoy them no longer as language learning assets or from a place of intellectual appreciation, but rather of deep personal urgency and celebration rooted in a more intimate and ongoing lived experience. I listen and think of Sarah, and of my own methods of resistance and joy.

Like an old friend, Sinno's voice greets me from my morning alarm, threading between sensuality and grief, between command and confession. Mashrou' Leila's music acknowledges the looming brutality of the world, yet invites us, just for a moment, to set that burden down.

Melanie Corinne is a writer/storyteller, USMC veteran and advocate residing on Long Island. Come can say "hi" or follow her on Bluesky @melaniecorinne.





Screen Lesbians
Puzzle can be found on page 25

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◂ Pragmatic Joy
Continued from page 7

doom spiral, thank you very much. When I'm looking for news, I want to know what actually happened, what has actually been proposed or what is actually about to happen next. With a modern media tone that increasingly obscures the line between opinion and news, it can be tricky.

Look for these red flags that what you're about to read borders more on "what if" than "what."

Leading questions in headlines. For example, "Will this latest Trump tweet spell doom for you?" Or, "If marriage equality falls, what will it mean for Michigan?" These are fine, important topics, but if you're shopping solely for information, this isn't it. Often, these stories are fear-based clickbait more than they are informative.

Reaction stories and videos. Again, this approach to newstelling has its place, and it's important to understand how society is reacting to key topics, but these stories are often the origin of the outrage porn currently clogging up your social media feed. When I'm trying to find a list of details about a new law that has passed, I might easily get derailed reading about what JD Vance thinks about it before I realize the article is never going to get to those details.

Bad faith stories from biased outlets. Be aware of where a story is coming from, every time. You can bet money that a story on Breitbart called "Democrats are worried about this pro-transgender bill" is going to lead you astray if you're expecting to learn about the party's true stance. Most likely, it's an article packed with cherrypicked details and focused on a quote or two taken out of context, and when you click on it, you'll find yourself awash in MAGA propaganda. We don't have time for that.

What should you read? Well, you've heard it time and again, but it's important to mix it up. Get news from varied, reliable sources. We all have our personal feelings about which outlets are really effing it up right now and which ones are still reliable, but I will say that the AP News wire and Reuters, both of which provide content to outlets around the world, are still considered by most to offer fact-based, non-partisan news. Often-overlooked PBS News and The Guardian are highly reputable, as well. Michigan Advance is a non-profit, award-winning news outlet that should be on your radar for state news.

Don't forget to track down primary sources. For example, go straight to the U.S. Supreme Court website to read decisions and to find Michigan legislation (proposed and passed), visit legislature.mi.gov/Bills.

4. Focus on 'pragmatic joy.'

I'm declaring 2025 my "pragmatic joy" era, a sentiment I feel encapsulates the Midwestern spirit of advocacy. Here in Michigan and throughout the Midwest, there has always been a "work hard/play" hard ethos, and I think that spirit serves us well in this moment. If your grandma was (or is) like mine, when she experienced grief, loss or fear, she passed out hugs as needed and then, she got shit done anyway. Along the way, she planted a garden with 10-foot-tall sunflowers that smiled at the sun and taught her granddaughter how to make a pie crust. Just mine? I'm sure you have a version of ancestors who shared that same blend of love and practicality in your lineage. Let's channel that energy.

Here are a few examples of what pragmatic joy looks like for me:

Supporting local LGBTQ+ community members directly while doing something you love. Thinking of joining a yoga class? Consider an LGBTQ-owned studio. Need a shopping fix? Countless LGBTQ+ creators and shop owners would love to serve you. Check out the local queer-focused theater scene or sign up for an art class led by a local queer artist.

Supporting independent journalism. Yep, a shameless plug here, but if you value independent voices in media and enjoy reading about LGBTQ+ joy and resilience, remember that it takes money to keep the lights on. Recently, print newspapers across the country were hit with the reality that because most newsprint is produced in Canada, it suddenly got a whole lot more expensive to print their publications thanks to Trump's tariffs — including this one.

Indie publications like ours rely on advertising dollars that are harder to come by in this time of economic uncertainty and LGBTQ+ targeting. So, please subscribe to Between The Lines at pridesource.com/subscribe and financially support other independent outlets if you're able. The impact of these direct contributions is difficult to overstate.

Volunteer with a Pride fest. Queer Christmas (or June, as some people call it) is right around the corner. Pride organizers are already deeply engrossed in getting their festivals off the ground, and while it might seem fun, it's also a lot of hard work. Pride festivals need volunteers to coordinate, corral and clean and to champion the events that offer our community a respite from Real World 2025. Get a few friends together and have fun doing hard, important work in a joyful space.

Just get out of the house. One of the easiest, but most impactful ways to advocate for the LGBTQ+ community is to simply exist in public exactly as who you are. Go enjoy the things you enjoy (to the extent that is comfortable for you, of course). Feeling nervous? There's safety in numbers. Consider an organized event with a local LGBTQ+ social group — you can find LGBTQ+ sports leagues, outdoor clubs, gaming groups and more throughout Michigan. Our biweekly "Queer Things to Do" list on pages 4 and 5 is an ideal starting point.

Can you think of ways to enjoy some pragmatic joy? Email me at sarah@pridesource.com! We're all in this together, and I welcome your thoughts.

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Bear Bergman
Continued from page 9

It's terrible and it's exhausting, and it sort of takes a bite out of absolutely everything because I have to worry about what if this, what if that, what if protesters, what if violence, what if, etc. And also, this has been to some degree the condition of my whole life as a working artist.

I've grown a lot of calluses around this particular kind of pushback against my work-slash-me existing and it's hard, and sometimes I have a lot of big feelings about it. And then, for better or for worse, the work requires that I conclude my big feelings as quickly as possible and get back to the job of doing this work because somebody has to.

What can audiences expect when they attend your show?

It's a storytelling show. It's a storytelling show and a Q&A. There are audiences. It's a performance. It's not a lecture or a presentation.

I would say it's probably most like The Moth storytelling show. You go, you sit. Other people tell you stories — except in this show, it's just me telling one long story that is overlaid and embellished with some stories of my life and my experience.

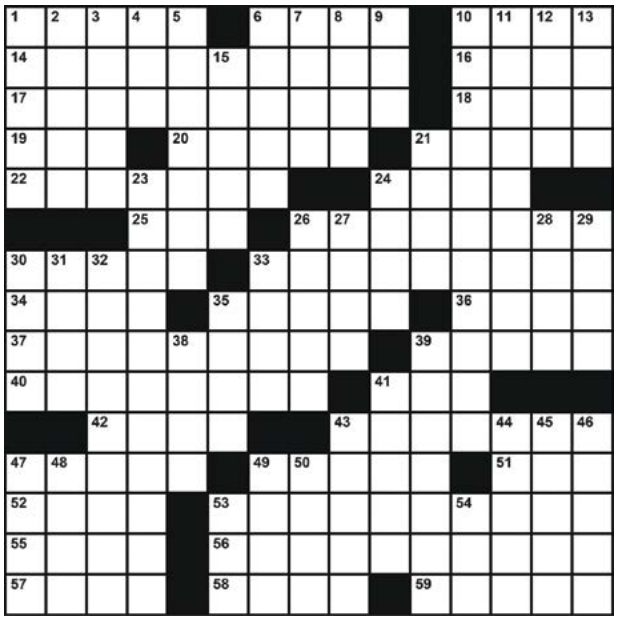
Like many pieces of theater, it's funny sometimes and it's heartbreaking sometimes and it's illuminating sometimes. The whole point of theater is to give you a way to walk into a story that you might not otherwise have a place to walk into, to consider a different experience, a different life, a different truth. We don't go to the theater to see what we already know and have seen.

Your work spans various formats — from performance to books to education. How do these different approaches connect?

I'm only good at one thing. I say that and people try and tell me that's not true, but I'm not being self-deprecating. I'm really good at one thing, but it's just like writing books and telling stories and doing queer education. It's all just one skill wearing a bunch of different hats.

All of the things are about "How do we create a world where queer and trans people can thrive and be well?" And if I can figure out a way, whether that's in writing or in publishing or in performance or in workshops or whatever, I will try.

S. Bear Bergman will perform "The First Jew in Canada (A Trans Tale)" at the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor (4001 Ann Arbor-Saline Road) on March 29 at 7 p.m., followed by a reception. Entrance is free (donations welcome).



Screen Lesbians

Across

1 “If ___ Walls Could Talk”
6 Mary topper
10 Sulu’s starship captain
14 Freaking out
16 Where to find Moby Dick
17 She played the lover of Rain Phoenix in “Even Cowgirls Get the Blues”
18 Singer Fure
19 Had sex with, in slang
20 “Will & Grace” first did this in 1998
21 Willing and able partner
22 How to discipline with a spanking
24 Rob of “Brothers & Sisters”
25 ___ UP
26 Capital after Rio
30 Where to find Uranus
33 Relatives of Spider-Man?
34 Diced meat dish
35 Frenzied way to run
36 Brady Bunch prefix
37 Right-mindedness
39 “Guilty” for Leopold and Loeb
40 Shooter of Rimbaud
41 Would-be master’s test
42 Got a little behind
43 For sale illegally
47 Runway walker
49 Word after “pinky”
51 “Stick that bull!”
52 Mine, to Rimbaud
53 She played the lover of Holliday Grainger in “Tell It to the Bees”
55 Precious stones
56 Mark Campbell of “Silent Night”
57 Lesbian character in “No Exit”
58 Sauna bath sites
59 Targets of tops

Down

1 Dull impact sounds
2 Overact, with “up”
3 Give the slip to
4 Pose for pix
5 Use Viagra, e.g.
6 Gay-rights activist Hay
7 Top
8 Fill with bullets
9 “A League of Their ___”
10 She played the lover of Saoirse Ronan in “Ammonite”
11 One from the land of the cut
12 Robert of “The Defenders”
13 Singer Perry
15 Type of trip
21 ___ Hashana
23 She played the lover of Olivia Colman in “The Favourite”
24 Be deficient in
26 The noblest Roman of them all
27 Like many Mae West quotes
28 What comes to mind
29 Biters of Caesar’s girlfriend
30 It pokes you in prison
31 Window piece
32 Riggs/King “Battle of the Sexes” site
33 “The Last King of Scotland” role
35 Wanting water
38 ___ Garcia Bernal
39 One way to divide shares
41 Flip out
43 Furry fellows
44 Trumpeter Armstrong
45 Journalist Harris
46 Lavatory door sign
47 Christmas threesome
48 Foreboding sign
49 Circumcision sound
50 Indiana Fever’s org.
53 “South Park’s” Big Gay and others
54 Milk units (abbr.)

See p. 21 for answers

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‹ Jon Savage
Continued from page 11

musicians with long hair — "looking quite feminine," he notes — as the British music scene underwent a seismic transformation in 1963, when The Beatles took the country by storm, followed by the Rolling Stones later that year. By 1964, long-haired groups were appearing across the U.K., each one pushing boundaries and challenging the status quo. This cultural explosion mirrored a broader sense of change, as the country saw a gradual but significant shift in attitudes and norms, one Savage calls a "big deal."

A pivotal moment came in 1967 when homosexuality was partially decriminalized in the U.K., a landmark achievement after years of hard-fought activism. The progress had taken over a decade of agitation, but it marked a tangible victory. Savage saw a deeper connection between the music scene and this legal shift. Many of the long-haired, boundary-pushing groups were led by gay managers, he says, whose influence behind the scenes quietly permeated the music and the cultural sensibility of the time. It wasn't just about the sounds or the fashion; it was a reflection of an undercurrent of change that helped shape public attitudes.

"People are going to take from it what they want. There's a lot of material in there," he said. "I've researched it. It hangs together, and it gives this picture where, really, a lot of the people in the book were just very brave." For Savage, this rebellion wasn't just about youth or rock 'n' roll; it was a battle for human dignity, an effort to open up the conversation about LGBTQ+ rights in ways that hadn't been done before.

For Savage, the inclusion of David Bowie, a key figure in his narrative, exemplified that kind of bravery. "You know, I include David Bowie in that," he said, almost as an afterthought, as though his presence in the story was both inevitable and significant. "Bowie has been criticized. But honestly, let me tell you, in the U.K., that was a huge thing for a lot of young LGBTQ+ people. And the gay press of the time really saw him as somebody who'd really also opened the door and was incredibly helpful."

"It was a mixture of both sincerity and calculation," he added, noting that Bowie had never been entirely transparent about his bisexuality, but his willingness to embrace the possibility in the public sphere made a difference. As we consider the influence of artists like Roan and Petras, Savage's assessment of Bowie's legacy offers a compelling framework: "You judge actions by results," he concluded.

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BRIO LIVING SERVICES–GREAT PLACES TO LIVE OR WORK! MyBrio.org

Clean Home...Happy Home!

86th Anniversary Savings!

Create a positive mindset and a healthier living space when you get your home Hagopian Clean.
Refresh your home now from top to bottom and save!

AIR DUCT CLEANING

$100 OFF

State-of-the-art Cyclone System Air Duct Cleaning

Must present coupon. Some restrictions apply. Not to be combined with any other coupons/offers.
Expires 3/31/2025

CARPET CLEANING

$135

2 Rooms + Hall In-Home Carpet Cleaning

Must present coupon. Up to 250 sq. ft. each room. Some restrictions apply. Not to be combined with any other coupons/offers.
Expires 3/31/2025

PICK-UP & DELIVERY

$25 OFF

Rug and/or Outdoor Cushion Cleaning Pick-up & Delivery Service

Must present coupon at time of pick up. Some restrictions apply. Not to be combined with any other coupons/offers.
Expires 3/31/2025

OUTDOOR CUSHION CLEANING

Spring is just around the corner! Bring your outdoor cushions, pillows, umbrellas and rugs in today so you'll be ready to enjoy your outdoor spaces.

The Most Trusted Name in Cleaning Since 1939

HAGOPIAN
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